

## The Snow-Man.

A snow-man stands in the moonlight-gold, smoking his pipe serenely. The night is cold, but the snow-man is warm and his hat is old. The blustering wind blows keenly. He has heard the children talking in gloom. That Santa Claus would visit. This night he would visit. And it is not strange he would wish to see how this can happen now is it?

He sees through the window the children bright. And hears them merry laughter. Round the Christmas tree, with its glory of light. When out from the chimney, in hoarse skins white. Comes good St. Nicholas springing!

And the snow-man laughs so hard at that. That when his laughter ceases. A pipe, a coat, and an old straw hat. Two things of coal and a flannel shirt. And that is left of the piece!

—GROVE F. COULIDGE, in the Christmas B. Nicholas.

## A PERFECT CHRISTMAS.

### CHAPTER I.

There was not a larger house in all the valley than Grandfather Vrooman's. It was old and comfortable, and seemed to be sound asleep, with a snow blanket all over its roof.

Nothing short of a real old-fashioned Christmas could wake up such a house as that.

Christmas was coming! Unless Santa Claus and the Simpsons and the Hopkinses should forget the day of the month, they would all be there at waking-up time to-morrow morning.

"Jane," said Grandfather Vrooman, that afternoon, to her daughter, Mrs. Hardy, who lived with her— "Jane, I've got 'em all fixed now just where they're going to sleep, and I've made up a bed on the floor in the store-room."

"Why, mother, who's that for?"

"You wait and see, after they get here, and we've counted 'em."

"Anyhow, there's cookies enough, and doughnuts."

"And the pies, Jane?"

"And I'm glad Liph gathered such piles of butternuts."

"Oh, mother," exclaimed little Sue, "gathered as many as he did, and heech-nuts, and hickory-nuts, and—"

"So you did, Sue; but I wonder if two turkeys'll go round, with only two pair of chickens?"

"Other," said Mrs. Hardy, "the plum-pudding?"

"Yes, but all those children! I do hope they'll get here to-night in time for me to know where I'm going to put 'em."

At the very minute, away up the north road, two miles nearer town, there was a sort of dot on the white road. If you were far enough away from it, it looked like a black dot, and did not seem to move. The nearer you came to it the fanner it looked, and the more it seemed to be nudging along with an immense amount of small energy. Very soon it seemed for anybody to see up to it was a little light.

It was a five-year-old boy, a little light in the middle of his face, but he was a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

He was a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow, a perfect little fellow.

Then he set off on a run as fast as his legs could carry him.

"Hold on!" shouted Liph. "We won't hurt you."

"Let him go," said Grandfather Vrooman. "He's on the road to our house. We'll pick him up."

"Took me for Santa Claus, I declare!" Liph, this time, just suit your grandmother."

It was a splendid young spruce tree, with wide-reaching boughs at less than two feet from the snow level. Grandfather Vrooman worked his way carefully in until he could reach the trunk with saw and axe, and then there was a sharp bit of work for him and Liph to get that "Christmas tree" stowed safely on the top of the sleigh load.

"Now for home, Liph. Your grandmother'll cut into one of them new pies for you when you get there."

"Look!" shouted Liph, "that little fellow's waiting for us at the top of the hill."

The hill was not a high one, and the road led right over it, and there on the summit stood Bijah.

"I'm so tired and hungry," he said to himself, "and there comes old Santa Claus, sleigh and all."

He was getting colder, too, now he was standing still, and when Grandfather Vrooman came along the road, walking in front of the sleigh, while Liph perched among the evergreens and drove, there seemed to be something warm about him.

It was not so much his high fur hat, or his tremendous overcoat, or his long white beard, or the way he smiled, but something in the sound of his voice almost drove the frost out of Bijah's nose.

"Well, my little man, don't you want to come to my house and get some pie?"

"Yes, sir."

Bijah could not think of one other word he wanted to say, and he mustered all the courage he had not to cry when Grandfather Vrooman picked him up, as if he had been a kitten, and perched him by the side of Liph among the evergreens.

When they got there, Liph's father and the hired man and Grandfather Vrooman were ready to lift off that Christmas tree and carry it through the front door and hall, and set it up in the "dark room" at the end of the hall.

That ought to have been the nicest room in the house, for it was right in the middle, but there were no windows in it. There were doors in every direction, however, and in the center of the ceiling was a "little hole" more than two feet square, with a wooden lid on it.

"John," said Grandfather Vrooman to Mr. Hardy, "we'll hoist the top of the tree through the hole. You go up and open the scuttle. Hitch the top good and strong. There'll be lots of things to hang on them branches."

Liph's father hurried up, stooped to open the scuttle, and that gave Grandfather Vrooman a chance to think of Bijah.

"Where is he, Liph?"

"Oh, he's all right. Grandmother's got him. She and mother caught him before he got into the house. He tried to run away, too."

Bijah's short legs had been too tired to carry him very fast, and Grandmother Vrooman and Mrs. Hardy had caught him before he got back to the gate.

The way they laughed about it gave him a great deal of courage, and he never cried when they took him by his red little hands, one on each side, and walked him into the house.

"Jane," said grandmother, "that will we do with him? The house'll be choke, jam, packed full, and there's an extra bed."

"Father found him in the snow somewhere. Just like him. But what a rosy little dot he is?"

"Are you Santa Claus' wives?" asked Bijah, with a quiver of his lip in pite of himself.

How they did chuckle when they tried to answer that question! All they made clear to Bijah was that the pace for him was in a big chair before the sitting-room fire-place, with a plate of mince-pie in his lap, and Bush, the big house-dog, sitting beside him.

"It's Santa Claus' dog," said Bijah to himself, "but his house isn't as big as the 'sylum'."

### CHAPTER II.

There were fire-places in every room on the ground floor of Grandfather Vrooman's house, and some kind of stove in more than half the rooms upstairs.

There were blazing fires on every hearth downstairs, and Liph got hot of Bijah after a while and made him and Bush go around with him to lick pokes them up. Bijah had never seen fire-places before, and he was a great wonder to him, but Bush sat down in front of each fire and barked at it.

It was getting dark when they reached the great front parlor, and the first place there was wonderful.

"Woof, woof, woof," barked Bush. Bijah stood still in the door while Liph went near enough to give that fire a poke, and he could hear Grandfather Vrooman away back in the sitting-room.

"Now, my dear, we'll stick him away somewhere. Put him in one of the stockings, and hang him up."

"That's me," groaned Bijah. "He's going to make a present of me to somebody. Oh, dear! I wish I could run away."

But he could not, for there was Liph and there was Bush, and it was getting dark.

"Now, my dear," went on grandfather, "I'll just light up, and then I'll go and meet that train. I'll bring Prue and her folks, and Pat'll meet the

other, and bring Ellen and hers. Won't the old home be full this time?"

"He's caught somewhere somewhere," whispered Bijah to himself. "I wonder who'll get 'em? Who'll get me?"

That was an awful question, but Liph and Bush all but ran against him just then, and he heard grandmother say:

"You'll have to stick candles on the window-sills. I can't spare any lamps for upstairs."

"But, my dear, it's got to be lit up—every room of it. I want 'em to know Christmas is going."

"That's what they were all saying at the 'sylum this morning,'" thought Bijah, "and here I am, right where it's coming to."

So he was, and he and Liph and Bush watched them finish setting the supper table, till suddenly Bush gave a great bark and spring away toward the front door. Grandfather Vrooman had hardly been gone from the house an hour, and here he was, back again.

Jingle, jingle, jingle. How the sleigh-bells did dance as that great load of young folk came down the road, and what a racket they made at the gate, and how Bush and Liph, and grandmother, and the rest did help them!

"He's caught 'em all," said Bijah, "but they ain't scared a bit."

No one would have thought so if they had seen Mrs. Prue Hopkins and her husband and her six children follow Grandfather Vrooman into the house.

They were hardly there, and some of them had their things on yet, when there came another jingle, and ever so much talking and laughter down the other road.

"He's caught some more. Some are little and some are big. I wonder who'll get the baby?"

Bush was making himself hoarse, and had to be spoken to by Mr. Hardy, while Mrs. Simpson tried to unmix her children from the Hopkinses long enough to be sure none of them had dropped out of the sleigh on the road.

Then Liph set to work to introduce his cousins to Bijah, and Bush came and stood by his new friend in gray, to see that it was properly done.

"Where'd you come from?" said Joe Simpson.

"'Sylum,'" said Bijah. "Where'd he catch you?"

"Catch what?" said Joe, but Liph managed to choke off the chuckle he was going out, and to shout out:

"Why, Joe, we found him in the road today. He thinks grandfather's old Santa Claus, and this house is Christmas."

"So I am—so it is," said Grandfather Vrooman. "We'll make him hang up his stocking with all the rest to-night."

Bijah could not feel scared at all with so many children around him, and he was used to being among a crowd of them. Still, it was hard to feel at home after supper, and he might have had a blue time of it if it hadn't been for Liph and Bush. It had somehow got into Bijah's mind that the dot in gray was under his protection, and he followed Bijah from one corner to another.

All the doors in the "dark room" were open, and it was the lightest room in the house, with its big fire on the hearth and all the lamps that were taken in after supper; but there was not one thing hanging on the Christmas tree until Grandfather Vrooman exclaimed:

"Now for stockings! It's getting late, children. I must have you all in bed before long."

"Stockings?"

They all knew what that meant, and so did Bijah, but it was wonderful how many that tree had to carry. Bob Hopkins insisted on hanging two pairs for himself, and Thad Simpson was begging his mother for a second pair, when Liph Hardy came in from the kitchen with a great, long, empty grain bag.

"What in the world is that for?" asked grandmother, perfectly astonished.

"Why, child, what do you mean by bringing that thing in here?"

"One big stocking for grandfather. Let's hang it up, boys. Maybe Santa Claus'll come and fill it."

"There was no end of fun over Grandfather Vrooman's grain bag stocking, that was all leg and no foot, but Uncle Hiram Simpson took it and, fastened it strongly to a branch in the middle of the tree. It was close to the trunk, and was almost hidden; but Liph saw Uncle Hiram wink at Aunt Ellen, and he knew there was fun of some kind that he had not thought of.

Grandmother Vrooman had been so busy with all those children from the moment they came into the house that she had almost lost her anxiety; but it came back to her now all of a sudden.

"Sakes alive! Jane," she said to Mrs. Hardy, "every last one of 'em's got to be in bed before we can do a thing with the stockings."

Bijah heard her, for he was just beyond the dining-room door, with a cruller in each hand, and it made him shiver all over.

"I wish I was in the 'sylum. No, I don't either, but I kind of wish I was."

Bijah was a very small boy, and he had not seen much of the world, but his ideas were almost as clear as those of the other children, and Grandmother Vrooman for the next fifteen minutes. The way the Simpson and Hopkins families got mixed up, with Liph and Sue Hardy to help them, was something wonderful. Old Bush wandered from room to room after them, wagging his tail and whining.

"Mother," exclaimed Mrs. Hardy at last, "the bed you made on the floor in the store-room!"

"Just the thing for him. All the rest go in pairs: I'll put that poor little dear right in there."

So she did, and not one of her own grand-children was tucked in warmer than was Bijah. He did not kick the bedclothes off next minute, either, and he was the only child in the house of whom that could be said. Grandfather Vrooman paid a visit of inspection all around from room to room, and Bush went with him. It took him a good while. When he came to the store-room and looked in, Bijah's tired eyes were already closed as tight as were the fingers of the little hand on the cover-

let, which was still grasping a cruller.

He was fast asleep, but Grandfather Vrooman was not; and yet, when Bush looked up at him, the old man's eyes were shut too, and there was a stir in his thick white beard as if his lips were moving.

Things got pretty still after a while, and then there began a steady procession in and out of the "dark room," which was not dark.

Boxes went in, and bundles, and these were opened and untied, and their contents spread out and looked at and distributed. It was no wonder Grandfather Vrooman's big sleigh had been so full, and the one Pat had driven, and when they brought the Hopkins and Simpson families from the north and south railway stations.

Grandfather himself went away out to the barn once for something, he said he had hidden there, and while he was gone Aunt Ellen Simpson and Uncle Hiram slipped a package into the grain bag, and grandmother handed Uncle Hiram another to slip in on top of it, and Uncle John Hardy and Uncle Martin Hopkins each handed him another, and the bag was almost half full, but you could not see it from outside; and then they all winked at each other when grandfather came in with a back-load of sleds. Grandmother may have thought she knew what they were winking about, but she didn't, for Uncle Hiram whispered to Aunt Ellen:

"I'm glad it's a big stocking. One 'll do for both of 'em."

It was late when they all went to bed, and there was so much fire in the fire-place they were half afraid to leave it, but Grandfather Vrooman said it was of no use to try and cover it up, and the room would be warm in the morning.

When they got upstairs, the children must all have been asleep, for there was not a sound from any room, and the older people went to bed on tiptoe, and they had tried hard to not so much as whisper on the stairs.

### CHAPTER III.

Oh, how beautiful the country was when the gray dawn came next morning—white, and still in the dim and growing light.

So still! But the stillest place was the one Bijah woke up in. He could not guess where he was at first, but he lay awhile and remembered.

"Santa Claus' house, and they're all real good. He's going to give me to somebody as soon as it's Christmas."

He got up very quickly and looked around him. It was not dark in the store-room, for there was a great square-hole in the middle of the floor, and a glow of dull red light came up through it which almost made Bijah feel afraid.

There was his little gray suit of clothes, cap and all, close by his bed on the floor, and he put them on faster than he ever had done it before.

"Where's my other stocking?"

He searched and searched, but it was of no use, and he said, "I can't run away in the snow with a bare foot."

He had been getting braver and braver, now he was wide awake, and he crawled forward and looked down the scuttle-hole. He knew that room in a minute, but he had to look twice before he knew the tree.

"Ever so many stockings! And they're all full. Look at those sleds! Oh my!"

Whichever way he looked he saw something wonderful, and he began to get excited.

"I can climb down. It's just like going downstairs."

It was just about as safe and easy, with all those branches under him, and all he had to do was to sit on one, and get ready to sit on the next one below him. He got about half way down, and there was the grain bag, with its mouth wide open. Just beyond it on the same bough, but further out, there hung a very small stocking indeed.

"That's mine!" exclaimed Bijah. "It's cram full, too. They've borrowed it, after all theirs were full. I want it to put on now, but I can't reach it out there."

Just then he began to hear noises up stairs, and other noises in the rooms below—shouts and stamping, and people calling to one another—and he could not make out what they were saying.

"Oh, dear! they're coming. Santa Claus is coming. What'll I do?"

Bijah was scared; but there was the wide mouth of Grandfather Vrooman's grain-bag "stocking," and almost before Bijah knew what he was doing he had slipped in.

Poor Bijah! The moment he was in he discovered that he could not climb out. He tried hard, but there was nothing on the sides of the bag for his feet to climb on. Next moment, too, he wanted to crouch down as low as he could, for all the noise seemed to be coming nearer.

So it was, indeed, and at the head of it were grandfather and grandmother and the other grown-up people, trying to keep back the boys and girls until they should all be gathered.

"Where's Bijah?" asked grandfather, after he had counted twice around, and was sure about the rest.

"Bijah!" exclaimed Liph. "Why, I looked in the store-room; he isn't there."

"Hope the little chap didn't get scared and run away."

"Dear me—through the snow!" exclaimed grandmother.

"Of course not," said Aunt Jane. "He's around somewhere. Let's let the children in. They're all here."

"Steady, now!" said grandfather, as he swung open the door into the "dark room." "Don't touch anything till we all get in. Stand around the tree."

He himself stepped right in front of it, and he looked more like a great tall, old Santa Claus than ever as he stood there. The children's eyes were opening wider and wider as they slipped around in a sort of very impatient circle; but grandfather's own eyes shut for a moment, as he had a habit of doing sometimes, and his white beard was all of a tremble. It was only for a moment, but when he looked around again he said:

"Now, children, wait. Which of you can tell me what child it was that came into the world on the first Christmas morning?"

They had not been quite ready to answer a question that came so suddenly, and before any of them could speak, a clear, sweet little voice came right out of the middle of the tree:

"I know. And the shepherds found him in a manger, and his mother was with him. He went down after my mother last summer."

"Bijah!" exclaimed grandfather, but grandmother was already pushing aside the boughs, and now they all could see him. Only his curly head and his little shoulders showed above the grain bag, and Uncle Hiram shouted:

"Father Vrooman, he is in your stocking! Who could have put him there?"

"I think I know," said grandfather in a very low, husky kind of voice; but all the Simpsons and Hopkinses and Hardys broke loose at that very moment, and it took them till breakfast-time to comp with each other the things they found in their stockings, and all the other wonderful fruits of that splendid Christmas eve.

Bijah was lifted out of the bag, and he got his stocking on, after it was empty. For some reason he couldn't guess why all the grown-up people kissed him, and grandfather made him sit next to him at breakfast.

That was a great breakfast, and it took ever so long to eat it, but it was hardly over before grandmother followed grandfather into the hall, and they heard her say:

"Now, husband, what are you wrapping up so far, just to go to the barn?"

"Barn! Why, my dear, I'm going to town. I told Pat to have the team ready."

"To town? Why, husband—"

"Mother, there'll be stores open to-day. I can buy cords of toys and candy and things. When I get to the Orphan Asylum, to tell 'em what has become of Bijah, and why he won't come back there again, I'm going to have enough to go around among the rest of 'em—I am, if it takes the price of a cow."

"Give 'em something for me."

Uncle Hiram heard it, and he shouted, "And for me," and Uncle John followed, and all the rest, till the children caught it up, and there was a contribution made by every stocking which had hung on that Christmas tree. They all gave just as fast as they understood what it was for, and the last one to fully understand was Bijah.

"You ain't going to take me?"

His lips quivered a little.

No, Bijah, not unless you want to go. Wouldn't you rather stay here?"

"Course I would."

That was not all, for both his hands were out, holding up the store of things which had come to him that morning, and he added, "Take 'em."

Something was the matter again with Grandfather Vrooman's beard, but he told Bijah he would get plenty of other things in town.

"Now, 'em, Bijah. Good-by, all of you. I'll be back in time for dinner. Children, you and Bush must be kind to Bijah. He came to us on Christmas morning, and he has come to stay."

Bush and the children did their part, and so did all the rest, and so did Bijah, and so it was a perfect Christmas.

Dr. J. T. Baker, a physician of New Castle, Pa., writes: "During the past eight years, I have had opportunity for studying the effect of Mischler's Herb Bitters upon my patients—those who have suffered from dyspepsia, loss of nervous energy, diarrhoea, etc. I have never known it to fail in effecting the most radical cure, and I have no hesitation in pronouncing it the most efficacious remedy discovered for diseases ensuing from a disordered stomach, liver, bowels, lungs and heart."

Order Of Publication.

STATE OF MISSOURI, )  
COUNTY OF BATES, ) ss.

In the Circuit Court of said county, February term, 1885.

Daniel Morehead and Cordelia Morehead his wife, plaintiffs, vs.

The unknown heirs of Absalom Frazier defendants.

Now at this day come the plaintiffs herein, by their attorneys before the undersigned clerk of the Circuit Court in vacation and file their Petition and affidavit, alleging among other things, that there are as plaintiffs verily believe, persons interested in the subject matter of this petition [whose names they can not insert herein because they are unknown to them], who have an interest or apparent interest in said premises which they inherit as heirs of Absalom Frazier deceased. Whereupon it is ordered by the Clerk in vacation that said defendants be notified by publication that plaintiffs have commenced a suit against them in this court, the object and general nature of which is to divest the title which said defendants have or may appear to have of, in and to the following land in Bates county Missouri to-wit: The northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of section twenty-five, in township No. 39 of range No. 30, as heirs of Absalom Frazier and vest the same in the plaintiff, Cordelia Morehead, and that unless the said defendants be and appear at this court, at the next term thereof, to this court, and holden at the court house in the city of Butler, in said county, on the 2nd day of February next, and on or before the sixth day of said term, if the term shall so long continue—and if not, then on or before the last day of said term—answer or plead to the Petition in said cause, the same will be taken as confessed, and judgement will be rendered accordingly.

And be it further ordered, that a copy hereof be published, according to law, in the Butler Weekly Times, a weekly newspaper printed and published in Bates county, Mo., for four weeks successively, the last insertion to be at least four weeks before the first day of the next term of circuit court. J. R. JENKINS, Circuit Clerk.

A true copy from the Record.

[SEAL.] Witness my hand and the Seal of the Circuit Court of Bates county, this 29th day of November 1884.

J. R. JENKINS, Circuit Clerk.

## BATES COUNTY

# National Bank.